

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 25, 2011

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MARCH 30, 2011

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2011–12 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 671

Introduced by Assembly Member Portantino

February 17, 2011

An act to add Section 16501.4 to the Welfare and Institutions Code, relating to child welfare services.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 671, as amended, Portantino. Child welfare services: education and training requirements.

Existing law requires the establishment and support of a public system of statewide child welfare services, for the protection of children who are alleged to be abused or neglected. Existing law provides for a statewide multipurpose child welfare training program to develop and implement statewide coordinated training programs designed specifically to meet the needs of county child protective services social workers assigned emergency response, family maintenance, family reunification, permanent placement, and adoption responsibilities.

This bill would ~~require a child welfare services social work supervisor to have a master's degree in social work, or a master's degree in behavioral science and meet other specified requirements, in addition to any other education, training, or certification required by law~~ *specify education and training requirements for social work supervisors and other personnel performing social work activities in a county child welfare services agency*. This bill would exempt a social worker

employed before January 1, 2012, from ~~these related field practice, course work, and experience~~ requirements, *as prescribed*.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes.

State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this
2 act to improve outcomes and increase consumer protection in child
3 welfare services by improving the educational standards of
4 supervisors in child welfare services to ensure that each supervisor
5 has the appropriate training, experience, and education.

6 ~~SEC. 2. Section 16501.4 is added to the Welfare and~~
7 ~~Institutions Code, to read:~~

8 ~~16501.4. (a) Unless exempt pursuant to subdivision (c), a child~~
9 ~~welfare services social work supervisor shall satisfy the education~~
10 ~~and training requirements provided for in this section, in addition~~
11 ~~to any education, training, or certification otherwise required by~~
12 ~~law.~~

13 ~~(b) A child welfare services social work supervisor shall have~~
14 ~~either of the following:~~

15 ~~(1) A master's degree in social work (MSW) from a program~~
16 ~~accredited by the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).~~

17 ~~(2) All of the following:~~

18 ~~(A) A master's degree in behavioral science from an accredited~~
19 ~~academic institution.~~

20 ~~(B) Twenty contact hours of population-specific education.~~

21 ~~(C) One year and 1,500 hours of documented, paid, supervised,~~
22 ~~equivalent master's post-graduate degree social work experience~~
23 ~~with children, youth, and families.~~

24 ~~(D) An evaluation from a supervisor.~~

25 ~~(E) A reference from an MSW or master's degree in behavioral~~
26 ~~sciences colleague.~~

27 ~~(F) An agreement to adhere to a professional code of ethics.~~

28 ~~(c) A child welfare services social work supervisor employed~~
29 ~~before January 1, 2012, is exempt from the requirements of this~~
30 ~~section.~~

31 *SEC. 2. Section 16501.4 is added to the Welfare and Institutions*
32 *Code, to read:*

1 16501.4. (a) (1) *The educational requirements for social work*
2 *supervisors for a county child welfare services agency shall be a*
3 *master's degree from an accredited or state approved graduate*
4 *school in social work or social welfare, or equivalent education*
5 *and experience, as determined by the department except as*
6 *provided in paragraph (2).*

7 (2) *A person who possesses a master's degree from an*
8 *accredited or state-approved graduate school in any of the*
9 *following areas, or equivalent education and experience, as*
10 *determined by the department, shall be qualified to perform*
11 *supervisory social work activities in a county child welfare services*
12 *agency:*

13 (A) *Marriage, family, and child counseling.*

14 (B) *Child psychology.*

15 (C) *Child development.*

16 (D) *Counseling psychology.*

17 (E) *Social psychology.*

18 (F) *Clinical psychology.*

19 (G) *Educational psychology, consistent with the scope of*
20 *practice as described in Section 4989.14 of the Business and*
21 *Professions Code.*

22 (H) *Education, with emphasis on counseling.*

23 (b) (1) *In addition to the degree requirements specified in*
24 *subdivision (a), all of the following course work and field practice*
25 *or experience shall be required of all newly hired county social*
26 *work personnel, effective January 1, 2012:*

27 (A) *At least four semester units of field practice at the master's*
28 *level or six months' full-time equivalent experience in a county*
29 *child welfare services agency setting.*

30 (B) *At least nine semester units of course work related to human*
31 *development or human behavior, or two years of experience*
32 *working with children and families as a major responsibility of*
33 *the position under the supervision of a supervising social worker.*

34 (C) *At least three semester units in working with minority*
35 *populations or six months of experience in working with minority*
36 *populations and training in cultural competency and working with*
37 *minority populations within the first six months of employment,*
38 *as a condition of employment.*

39 (D) *At least three semester units in child welfare or at least two*
40 *years of experience in a county child welfare services setting.*

1 (2) (A) A person who does not satisfy the requirements specified
2 in subdivision (a) or paragraph (1) may apply for an exception,
3 as provided for in subdivisions (c) and (d).

4 (B) Exceptions granted by the department prior to January 1,
5 2012, shall remain in effect.

6 (3) (A) Persons hired on or after January 1, 2012, who do not
7 satisfy the requirements specified in paragraph (1) shall be
8 required to successfully complete those requirements in order to
9 be employed as social work supervisors in a county child welfare
10 services setting.

11 (B) An employee hired prior to January 1, 2012, shall not be
12 required to satisfy the requirements of paragraph (1) in order to
13 remain employed as a social work supervisor in a county child
14 welfare services agency.

15 (4) Course work and field practice or experience completed to
16 fulfill the degree requirements of subdivision (a) may be used to
17 satisfy the requirements of this subdivision.

18 (c) A person seeking an exception to the requirements of
19 subdivision (a) or (b) based on completion of equivalent education
20 and experience shall apply to the department pursuant to the
21 process established by the department.

22 (d) The State Department of Social Services shall complete the
23 process for the exception to minimum education and experience
24 requirements described in subdivision (a) or (b) within 30 days of
25 receiving the exception application of a social work supervisor
26 from the county child welfare services agency.